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Public Involvement

Public involvement was extensive during the general management planning process at Glacier National Park. As part of the process six newsletters were distributed and two series of public meetings were held.

The National Park Service sought public input throughout to help refine the planning process, to scope the issues to be addressed in the plan and environmental impact statement, and to identify alternatives for the future of Glacier.

Public involvement activities provided a means for people at the local and the national level to comment on the plan. Each phase of the process featured a variety of events and meetings that provided forums for public expression and opportunities for dialogue between the National Park Service and the public as well as written comments.

SCOPING

The planning process officially began with a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for Glacier National Park general management plan in the Federal Register (vol. 60, no. 67, of April 7, 1995, p.17804-17805). Public involvement began with the distribution of a one-page mailer in March 1995 to introduce the general management plan and to invite the public to attend open houses.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Nine open houses were held in the spring 1995. In Montana, there were meetings in Browning, Great Falls, Helena, Kalispell, Missoula, St. Mary, and West Glacier. In Canada meetings took place in Lethbridge, Alberta, and Fernie, British Columbia.

Newsletter 1

Sent to the public in June 1995, *Newsletter 1* included draft park purpose and significance statements, planning issues, a description of the planning process, and a schedule for the general management plan. A comment form was included to request comments on park purpose and significance and issue statements. Prior to *Newsletter 1*, the park had received 2,000 individual comments from the open

houses and letters. In response to *Newsletter 1*, approximately 300 letters were received.

Newsletter 2

Newsletter 2, sent in November 1995, presented the revised purpose, significance, and planning issues. Revisions were made based on park staff and public comments. The newsletter also included an update on the planning process and schedule and described what the public could expect next.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Newsletter 3

In July 1996 *Newsletter 3* was distributed to the public, presenting preliminary draft alternatives. Glacier's role in the ecosystem was also included. Also included in *Newsletter 3* was a comment form. Comments were due by August 30, 1996. Due to the high level of public interest the deadline was extended to October 1, 1996.

Public Meetings

Twelve public meetings were held between August 12 and August 25, 1996. The meetings were held in Montana in Browning, St. Mary, West Glacier, Pablo, Missoula, Columbia Falls, Helena, Great Falls, and Kalispell. In Canada, the meetings were held in Fernie, British Columbia, and Lethbridge and Waterton Townsite, Alberta. A total of more than 1,300 people attended the 12 meetings.

In general, the preliminary draft alternatives were not well received by the public as evidenced by the written responses and testimony received at the public meetings.

Content Analysis

In September, October, and November of 1996, an analysis of comments on *Newsletter 3* was conducted under contract by the Flathead National Forest. A team of Glacier National Park and Flathead National Forest employees entered comments from approximately 1,600 written comments (letters and the response sheet included in *Newsletter 3*), petitions, and the 12 public meetings into a computerized database. Comments were classified into more than 100 different subjects. The database allowed searches by subject, word, and individual letter so that park managers could easily refer to public comments as they proceeded with the planning effort.

The content analysis was one of the tools that the planning team used to understand how the public felt about *Newsletter 3*. Responses came in the form of letters and petitions, over the Internet, on a newsletter response sheet, through

public meetings, and through comments from park staff. Respondents included people who attended public meetings, Glacier National Park staff, university staffs, professional societies, recreational/multiple use organizations, local community officials, businesses, conservation and preservation groups, elected officials, county representatives, and other federal agencies. There were 826 individuals from Montana and 603 people from other states who commented. Six petitions were received with more than 1,400 signatures. There were 22 individuals from foreign countries who responded. Many people wrote more than one letter.

The deadline for public comment in response to *Newsletter 3* was October 1, 1996. However, the park continued to receive comments on a daily basis after October 1. Those comments were not recorded in the database/content analysis but were considered as the park staff moved forward with new alternative development.

Newsletter 4

The purpose of *Newsletter 4*, distributed in December 1996, was to update the public and maintain a dialogue as the comments continued to be analyzed.

Newsletter 5

Sent to the public in April 1997, *Newsletter 5* presented a summary of the content analysis of public comment on *Newsletter 3*, letting the public know who responded and what was heard. Also included was a postage paid mailer for people to use to request a copy of the *Synopsis of Public Comment on Newsletter 3*. Among others, one of the comments heard frequently from the public was “leave it like it is” and “why fix something that isn’t broken?” For this reason, the planning team decided to present some of the issues facing park managers. In *Newsletter 5*, the four issues presented were “Deterioration of Historic Park Lodges and Other Buildings,” “Commercial Helicopters and Fixed-Wing Air Tours,” “Increasing Park Visitation,” and “Rehabilitation of the Going-to-the-Sun Road.” Because a general management plan is supposed to provide a framework for making decisions into the future, the planning team began working on defining future management goals and objectives for the six commonly known areas or geographic areas introduced in *Newsletter 5* (Goat Haunt, Many Glacier, Two Medicine, Middle Fork, North Fork, and Going-to-the-Sun Road).

Newsletter 6

Sent in August 1997, *Newsletter 6* presented an overall park management philosophy and guiding philosophies for each of the six geographic areas in the park (Goat Haunt, Many Glacier, Two Medicine, Middle Fork, North Fork and Going-to-the-Sun Road corridor). As in *Newsletter 5*, some of the many challenges facing the park were presented in more detail. The issues mentioned were regional challenges, visitor use on Going-to-the-Sun Road, heritage and lodging, and scenic air

tours over Glacier National Park. The public was encouraged to continue sending any comments they might have.

Focus Groups on Issues

Between September 2 and October 15, 1997, focus group meetings were held on the issues described in *Newsletter 6*: heritage and lodging, regional challenges, increasing use on the Going-to-the-Sun Road and scenic air tours over Glacier National Park. The purpose for these groups was to gather ideas for resolving these issues while discussing them in more depth. To ensure that a range of ideas would be heard, people with varying expertise and viewpoints were invited to each meeting. The ideas from the focus groups, as well as all the ideas and comments received from the park staff and public since the project began, were used by the planning team to develop new GMP alternatives.

The groups were constantly reminded that they were not there to reach consensus or give advice on what should and should not be considered. The groups were not asked to meet again.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Various groups requested that park staff speak with them during the planning process. These included:

- Friends of Glacier
- Montana Wilderness Association
- Columbia Falls Chamber of Commerce
- Flathead Area Associated Chamber of Commerce
- Shelby Chamber of Commerce
- Kalispell Chamber of Commerce
- Glacier-Waterton Visitor Association
- Hungry Horse Ranger District $\frac{3}{4}$ Flathead National Forest
- University of Montana (individual classes)
- Iowa State University (individual classes)

American Indian Consultation

Two local American Indian Tribes (Blackfeet and the Confederated Salish-Kootenai tribes) have been involved throughout the planning process. The Blackfeet Indian Reservation borders the east boundary of Glacier National Park. The Confederated Salish-Kootenai tribes reside on the Flathead Reservation, southwest of Glacier National Park. Ongoing informal discussions are taking place with both tribes.

**PUBLIC OFFICIALS, AGENCIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS TO WHOM THE
DRAFT GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATE-
MENT OR THE DRAFT GMP\EIS SUMMARY WERE SENT**

Elected Officials

Max Baucus, United States Senate
Conrad Burns, United States Senate
Rick Hill, United States House of Representatives
Marc Racicot, governor of Montana
Howard Gipe, chair, Flathead County Board of Commissioners
Dan Geer, chair, Glacier County Board of Commissioners
Mickey Pablo, chair, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council
Earl Old Person, chair, Blackfeet Tribal Business Council
Gary Hall, mayor of Columbia Falls
William Morris, mayor of Browning
Bill Boharski, mayor of Kalispell
Mike Jenson, mayor of Whitefish

Federal Agencies

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Army Corp of Engineers
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Lewis and Clark National
Forest
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Flathead National Forest
U.S. Department of Transportation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division

State and Other Government Agencies

British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
British Columbia Ministry of Forests
Montana Department of Commerce
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Montana Department of Transportation
Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta

Organizations

Alliance for the Wild Rockies
Backcountry Horsemen of the Flathead
Burlington Northern Santa Fe
Canyon R.V. and Campground
Castle Crown Wilderness Coalition

Coalition for Canyon Preservation
Columbia Falls Area Chamber of Commerce
Conference of National Park Concessioners
Continental Divide Trail Society
F.H. Stoltze Land and Lumber Co.
Flathead Basin Commission
Flathead Business and Industry Association
Flathead Economic Policy Center
Flathead Fishing Association
Flathead Resource Organization
Flathead Valley Community College
Flathead Wildlife, Inc.
Friends of Glacier
Friends of the Wild Swan
Glacier Mountain Shadows Resort and Western Inns
Glacier Natural History Association
Glacier Park Foundation
Glacier Park International Airport
Glacier Park Ski Tours
Glacier Park, Inc.
Glacier Raft Company
Glacier Wilderness Guides
Good Medicine Lodge
Great Bear Foundation
Inland Empire Public Lands Council
Kalispell Area Chamber of Commerce
Montana Historical Society
Montana Wilderness Association
Montanans for Multiple Use
National Parks and Conservation Association
National Trust for Historic Preservation
National Wildlife Federation
Nature Conservancy, Montana Chapter
North Fork Preservation Association
St. Mary Lodge and Resort
University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research
Waterton Glacier Visitor Association
Waterton-Glacier Visitor Association
Wilderness Watch
Wildlife Biology Program, University of Montana

A complete listing of agencies, organizations, public officials, and individuals to whom a copy of the *Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* or the overview was sent is on file at Glacier National Park.



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

ECOLOGICAL SERVICES
100 N. PARK, SUITE 320
HELENA, MT 59601
(406) 449-5225

M.25 Glacier NP (I)

August 14, 1995

Mr. David A. Mihalic, Superintendent
Glacier National Park
West Glacier, Montana 59936

Dear Mr. Mihalic:

This is in response to your letter received June 19, 1995 regarding your species list request for the Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed General Management Plan for Glacier National Park.

In accordance with Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended, we have determined that the following listed, proposed and category 1 candidate threatened or endangered (T/E) species may be present in the project area.

<u>Listed Species</u>	<u>Expected Occurrence</u>
grizzly bear (<u><i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i></u>)	resident
gray wolf (<u><i>Canis lupus</i></u>)	resident
peregrine falcon (<u><i>Falco peregrinus</i></u>)	transient
bald eagle (<u><i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i></u>)	resident
water howellia (<u><i>Howellia aquatilis</i></u>)	below 5000'
<u>Proposed Species</u>	
None	
<u>Category 1 Candidate Species</u>	
bull trout (<u><i>Salvelinus confluentus</i></u>)	resident

Section 7(c) of ESA requires that Federal agencies proposing major construction activities complete a biological assessment to determine the effects of the proposed actions on listed and proposed species and use the biological assessment to determine whether formal consultation is required. A major construction activity is defined as "a construction project (or other undertaking having similar physical impacts) which is a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as referred to in the National Environmental

Policy Act" (50 CFR Part 402). If a biological assessment is not required (i.e. all other actions), the Federal agency is still required to review their proposed activities to determine whether listed species may be affected. If such a determination is made, formal consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is required.

For those actions wherein a biological assessment is required, it should be completed within 180 days of initiation, but can be extended by mutual agreement between the Federal agency or its designated non-Federal representative and the Service. If the assessment is not initiated within 90 days, the list of T/E species should be verified with the Service prior to initiation of the assessment. The biological assessment may be undertaken as part of the Federal agency's compliance of Section 102 of the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) and incorporated into the NEPA documents. We recommend that biological assessments include the following:

1. A description of the project,
2. A description of the specific area that may be affected by the action,
3. The current status, habitat use, and behavior of T/E species in the project area,
4. Discussion of the methods used to determine the information in Item 3,
5. An analysis of the affects of the action on listed species and proposed species and their habitats, including an analysis of any cumulative effects,
6. Coordination/mitigation measures that will reduce/eliminate adverse impacts to T/E species,
7. The expected status of T/E species in the future (short and long term) during and after project completion,
8. A determination of "is likely to adversely affect" or "is not likely to adversely affect" for listed species,
9. A determination of "is likely to jeopardize" or "is not likely to jeopardize" for proposed species.
10. Citation of literature and personal contacts used in developing the assessment.

If it is determined that the proposed program or project "is likely to adversely affect" any listed species, formal consultation should be initiated with this office. If it is concluded that the project "is not likely to adversely affect" listed species, we should be asked to review the assessment and concur with the determination of no adverse effect.

3

Pursuant to Section 7(a) (4) of ESA, if it is determined that any proposed species may be jeopardized, the Federal agency should initiate a conference with us to discuss conservation measures for those species. Although candidate species have no legal status and are accorded no protection under ESA, they are included here to alert your agency of potential proposals or listings.

A Federal agency may designate a non-Federal representative to conduct informal consultation or prepare biological assessments. However, the ultimate responsibility for Section 7 compliance remains with the Federal agency and written notice should be provided to the Service upon such a designation. We recommend that Federal agencies provide their non-Federal representatives with proper guidance and oversight during preparation of biological assessments and evaluation of potential impacts to listed species.

Section 7(d) of ESA requires that the Federal agency and permit/license applicant shall not make any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources which would preclude the formulation of reasonable and prudent alternatives until consultation on listed species is completed.

Please contact us by mail at the above-referenced letterhead address or call Kevin Shelley at (406) 758-6881 if we can be of further assistance. Your interest and cooperation in meeting our joint responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act are appreciated.

Sincerely,



Kemper M. McMaster
Field Supervisor
Montana Field Office

MGMTPLAN.DOC

cc: ES Kalispell Suboffice



State Historic Preservation Office

Montana Historical Society

1410 8th Avenue • PO Box 201202 • Helena, MT 59620-1202 • (406) 444-7715 • FAX (406) 444-6575

July 25, 1995

Mr. David A. Mihalic, Superintendent
Glacier National Park
West Glacier, Montana 59936

Re: Task Directive: General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Mihalic:

Thank you for a copy of the above cited document for our review and comment.

From the standpoint of cultural resources, I believe the recent studies underway in the areas of archaeological survey, ethnographic overview, and addendums to the nomination of historical resources in the Park will be valuable tools in the development of the GMP/EIS. I encourage you to integrate this information in your development of a GIS.

I have no questions or comments to make on the Task Directive. Our office looks forward to our future involvement in the EIS process.

Sincerely,

Mark F. Baumlér, Ph.D.
Interim State Historic Preservation Officer

File: NPS/Glacier NP/1995

Compliance with Federal and State Laws, Executive Orders, and Regulations

In implementing the *Glacier National Park General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*, the National Park Service would comply with all applicable laws and executive orders, including:

The National Environmental Protection Act — Many of the actions discussed in this document would have to be analyzed further after specific sites were selected. Additional environmental assessments or environmental impact statements would be prepared as necessary. These include expanding visitor opportunities along the Going-to-the-Sun Road, rehabilitation of the Many Glacier Hotel and other visitor facilities, identification of alternative sites for Divide Creek development, and reconstruction of the Going-to-the-Sun Road.

The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C 4151 et seq.) and Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C 701 et seq.) — All facilities and programs developed would be accessible to visitors and employees with disabilities to the extent possible without compromising the values for which the park was established.

Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C 7401 et seq.) — Glacier National Park is designated as a mandatory Class I area under section 162(a) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C 7401 et seq.). This designation gives the federal land manager (the assistant secretary of the interior for fish and wildlife and parks) and the park superintendent an affirmative responsibility to protect the air quality and air quality-related values in the park. Air quality-related values are defined as visibility and those scenic, cultural, biological, and recreational resources of an area that are affected by air pollution. Section 118 of the Clean Air Act requires all federal facilities to comply with federal, state, and local air pollution control laws and regulations. The park is in two air quality control regions, the Missoula Intrastate Air Quality Control Region west of the Continental Divide and the Great Falls Intrastate Air Quality Control Region east of the divide. The Missoula Air Quality Control Region is maintaining all national air quality standards except for fine particulate matter (PM-10), while the Great Falls Air Quality Control Region is maintaining all standards except for carbon monoxide in the city of Great Falls. Glacier National Park would work with the state to ensure that all park activities meet all

requirements. During the design phase for any proposed development in the park, an analysis of anticipated emissions from construction activities would be conducted to ensure conformity with federal and state air quality regulations as part of the Clean Air Act. Glacier National Park would continue to participate in the following air quality monitoring programs: the National Dry Deposition Network, the Visibility Monitoring and Data Analysis Program / Interagency Monitoring of Protected Visual Environments, the National Atmospheric Deposition Program / National Trends Network, Columbia Falls Aluminum Company baseline fluoride monitoring program, and (through the Environmental Protection Agency) the Demonstration Index Site Project.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C 1531 et seq.)

— Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires all federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitat. The National Park Service is conducting informal section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In accordance with a discussion held between Glacier staff and the Fish and Wildlife Service, a biological assessment on the preferred alternative will be completed before this plan becomes final. Before construction and during the design phase, there would be additional surveys and continued consultation to protect these species. The surveys would assist in developing mitigation to protect the species or in modifying the design to avoid them.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C 470, et. seq.) — Section 106 requires that federal agencies having direct or indirect jurisdiction over undertakings take into account the effects of those undertakings on national register properties and allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment. Toward that end, the National Park Service would work with the Montana state historic preservation officer and the advisory council to meet the requirements of the July 25, 1997 programmatic agreement among the National Park Service (Glacier National Park), the advisory council, and the Montana state historic preservation officer. That agreement provides for a number of “programmatic exclusions” or actions that may be implemented without the normal review by the Montana state historic preservation officer and the advisory council. The terms of the agreement apply to planning, design, construction, and maintenance undertakings in Glacier National Park and the East Glacier administrative site. In addition to those actions listed in the plan further consultation may be undertaken during design to ensure adequate mitigation of any effects.

Executive Order 11988, “Floodplain Management” – This order requires all federal agencies to avoid the construction of certain types of facilities in the 100-year and 500-year floodplains unless no other practical alternatives exist. No new floodplains would be impacted by development. The Divide Creek development would be removed.

Executive Order 11990, “Protection of Wetlands” – This order requires federal agencies to avoid, where possible, impacts on wetlands. No known wetlands would be affected by the preferred alternatives.

The following additional actions would be taken to ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.

The necessary permits would be obtained and consultation conducted for each action proposed in the *General Management Plan*. This would include a 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for any construction below the high water line of lakes and streams in the park. This would also include a permit from the Montana Office of Water Quality for any construction near lakes and streams, including the modification or placement of culverts.

Permits and/or a 401 certificate would also be obtained from the Montana Office of Water Quality and Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks for actions involving streams and lakes in the park and with the Blackfoot Tribe for Divide Creek.

In situations where it is applicable, a sedimentation and erosion control plan would be submitted to the state of Montana before construction, and a permit authorizing the work would be obtained. The state of Montana would also issue stormwater management approval based on the sedimentation and erosion control plan and construction drawings.

Archeological surveys would be conducted prior to construction on all sites and an archeologist would monitor ground-disturbing activities.

As designs are developed for the following actions proposed in this plan, Section 106 compliance would be initiated under the terms of the programmatic agreement:

- rehabilitating the Many Glacier Hotel
- rehabilitating the Swiftcurrent Motor Inn and cabins
- rehabilitating the Lake McDonald Lodge and cabins
- making structural improvements in the Rising Sun historic district
- making structural improvements to the Two Medicine campstore
- making facilities, including historic structures, accessible for people with disabilities
- relocating St. Mary administrative facilities out of the floodplain
- reconstructing the Going-to-the-Sun Road
- constructing additional pullouts, trails, picnic areas, or other visitor opportunities along Going-to-the-Sun Road